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Account of Sarah Lawrence  
1820

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AN  
ACCOUNT  
OF  
**SARAH LAWRANCE;**

MANY YEARS A SERVANT,  
OR ADOPTED DAUGHTER, RATHER,

OF  
MR. AND MRS. FLETCHER.

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*WRITTEN BY MRS. FLETCHER.*

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LONDON:  
PRINTED BY THOMAS CORDEUX;  
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NOSTER-ROW.

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1820.

BW289

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SARAH LAWRENCE

FIFTY YEARS A SLAVE

OR ADOPTED DAUGHTER

MRS. AND MRS. FLETCHER

WRITTEN BY MRS. FLETCHER

LONDON

PRINTED BY THOMAS COOPER

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STREET, LONDON

1850

## **AN ACCOUNT, &c.**

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SARAH LAWRENCE was the niece of my friend Sarah Ryan. Providence cast her into our hands, when a little child. As she increased in reason, we observed a remarkably upright, obedient spirit in her, and a great attachment to us. When very young, she would often cry to the Lord, with great earnestness, that she might never be separated from me. One thing was remarkable; if her aunt and I were conversing about any thing private, we had no need to caution her, if present, for I never knew her, though a child, repeat any thing; such a sense she seemed always to feel of the duty of keeping a secret, and such a watchfulness, even at that age, over her words. And in above forty years she lived with me, I have never found in her any declension from this spirit of faithfulness; and from the time she became my friend, as well as child, I could consider every word spoken to her as secure as in my own bosom.

The marks of a work of grace beginning on her soul, might be observed very early. Before she was eight years old, she was often under strong convictions for sin, as she afterwards told me, and frequently was afraid when she lay down in bed that she should awake in hell! When she was about ten years of age, she found a strong desire to be devoted to God; and when

she heard us read in the family of the sufferings of our Lord, or of the martyrs, it would kindle in her breast an intense desire to suffer something for Him who had borne so much for her ; and she used to do many actions, according to her childish idea, to satisfy that desire,—such as tying her arms behind her all night, and lying in the most uneasy posture she could, &c. Often she was filled with thankfulness for the opportunity she had of receiving a religious education ; and determined, if ever she was carried into the world, she never would be like others. “ No,” said she, “ not so much as my cap will I change ; I will always walk by the rules and plan I have been brought up by ; and if I have any thing to do with children, I will strive to teach them as I have been taught.” And truly in this she made good her words. She did labour and delight in the children’s meetings, which she held in different places. And such a gift of wisdom for the instruction of youth, as she was blest with for these many years past, I have seldom observed.

When about sixteen, conviction for sin was fastened more deeply on her mind ; and I have heard her tell with what earnest cries and tears she used to wrestle with the Lord, that He would make her a Christian indeed, and join her to his people here, and hereafter. She had such a sense of the sin of her fallen nature, that she carried constant condemnation in her own breast, and was continually acknowledging how just it would be in God to send her to hell ! Sometimes she had hope from his mere mercy, through Christ ; at others, she thought she never would be accepted ! When near eighteen, she was taken into the society, and the June following,

she went to Leeds old church to be confirmed. She walked home again alone, (about five miles,) and all the way was pleading with the Lord, that she might never grow slack again. When she got near home, the word came to her with much power, *I will keep thee as the apple of mine eye.* This filled her soul with delight and consolation, now firmly believing she should be made a true child of God. (The following I take from her own account.) "For two or three weeks after this, I continued to be much in earnest, and was encouraged to believe the Lord would give me a clear evidence that I was forgiven. On Tuesday night, before I came into the class-meeting, I thought I will determine to speak quite freely to night, (a thing I had been quite backward to do.) My mistress met the class, and begun with that word, 'Rejoice evermore, and in every thing give thanks.' When she came to speak to me, she said, 'Sally, have *you* nothing to give thanks for?' I answered, 'Yes, many things;' and named the above promise. In doing which I felt my faith a little increased.

"Next day, coming into her room, she asked me, If I could trust in the Lord now? adding, 'All is done on his side. 'Tis only for you to accept it by believing.' I replied, 'I think I can;' but as I left the room, a doubt started up, I do not know my sins are forgiven. Yet I thought I do feel a change. The Friday following, as she was meeting the children, my hope increased; and while she was repeating those words in prayer, 'There is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus,' I felt such a confidence, there was no condemnation for me, as filled my whole soul with joy and love. Now

I did feel the liberty of God's dear children, and I think, if all earth and hell had opposed, it seems to me impossible a doubt should have entered in. In this sweet liberty, keeping the peaceful presence of God, I continued to walk for some months.

“One day, meeting with something that was trying, I spoke a hasty word to one of the family; immediately I felt a cloud on my mind, and could not rejoice in the Lord as before, though I sought it with prayers and tears. From that day I received a deeper conviction than ever before of the necessity of all evil tempers being removed out of my heart. And for the next four months my whole soul seemed engaged in the pursuit of that deliverance; and I was often in the daily expectation thereof, and I especially looked for it in every means of grace. One Wednesday night, in that blessed meeting we used to have once a fortnight at Cross Hall, where so many were blest, while I was waiting on the Lord, and saw myself as lying at the Pool side, longing for the Lord to say, *Be clean*, my soul was engaged in fervent prayer that I might that night be brought into clear liberty; and while my dear mistress was praying, several promises were applied to my mind, such as, ‘Thou art clean through the word I have spoken unto thee,’ &c. I now felt unbelief give way, and was enabled to cast my soul on the perfect atonement, and felt the Divine efficacy of that blood which cleanseth from all sin. (This was December 30, 1778.) From that night I felt a very great change, and begun to walk much more closely with God than I had done before. That which I enjoyed in Justification was precious, but this far exceeded. Now I could begin the new year with a

new heart; and so powerfully did the love of God fill and enlarge my soul, that I was constrained many times to cry out in the fulness thereof, 'Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth I desire in comparison with thee.' I could truly say, 'All slavish fear is gone; I have but one fear to displease that gracious God who hath done so much for me.' Now I could rejoice in tribulation, crosses, and provocations. I felt the love which never faileth, and a delight in the thought that I had any thing to bear for God. I found a continual watchfulness, and such an invariable sense of the Lord's approval, that I was every moment as it were afresh accepted in the Beloved.

"After walking in this liberty for some months, a circumstance occurred which proved to me a source of many sorrows. Being one day falsely accused by some I was conversing with, I answered the truth; but perceiving what I said was not received, I felt grief, it being a near point, and one in which I was perfectly clear. I did not speak an unkind word, nor indeed feel any thing contrary to love. But I burst into tears; on which one said, who at that time lived with us, 'Well, Sally, don't you feel sin *now*? If you don't, what makes you cry?' A cloud immediately fell on my mind, and I began to reason, 'what was it made me cry!' do I not feel something wrong? Shall I not again be as before; with many fiery darts which satan took the opportunity to throw in; and looking at the waves, I began to sink, and unbelief once more lifted up its head, and I was driven into many fears and needless scruples. I now felt the most anxious desire to recover the ground I had lost; but not clearly seeing the way of faith, I strove to

go great lengths in fasting and self-denial, and herein the devil got the advantage, and tossed my soul with sore temptation. I was, as I thought, condemned in every thing I went about, fearing I sought my own will, and afraid to eat my bread, or put on my clothes, lest it should be an indulgence. By this I much hurt my health, and more my soul. For my mind was so taken up with reasoning about every thing I did, that it kept me in continual temptation, and prevented that quiet attention to the Lord which is the only posture for the soul to grow in. And I have since clearly discovered that that was the very thing satan strove for. I found, however, at times, many gracious visits from the Lord, and had sweet communion with Him. My desire to do his will in every point was strong and ardent, and my heart was ready to break at the thought of having declined from that intimate union I once enjoyed.

“About this time I dreamed that I saw a bright cloud. As I looked on it, it grew more and more glorious, and there appeared in it a company of the heavenly host, which I saw as far as the head, shoulders, and breast. But one among them I saw quite to the feet, of exquisite beauty. He came through the cloud, and appeared in a field near our garden. I cried out, ‘O Nanny Walker, there is the Lord Jesus.’ I ran to the garden-door and opened it. He took hold of my hand and kissed me, and came with me into the parlour! I run to tell my mistress, the Lord Jesus was in the parlour! She went in, and after a time they came out together, and went into the red room, where I thought Mr. Wesley was sitting. Our Lord touched his forehead, and said, ‘You are in the presence of God, and the holy angels.’ He then came into the parlour again.

I thought, I long to go in, and opening the door, I met him. He kissed me, and said, 'Before I come again, you will be taken.' To which I answered, 'Ah! Lord, I often fear I shall never hold out. I shall never come there.' He then stooped down, and took up my right foot, and set it down again. It was explained to me—He would order my steps. Then he went through the garden, and gradually ascended till I saw him no more."

I would here observe, some time after my dear Mr. Fletcher's death, as I was one day pleading with the Lord to raise up more helpers in the work, the word came to me, 'the spirit of Elijah shall rest on Elisha.' I thought it meant her, and soon after a visible concern arose in her mind, more forcible than ever, for the souls of the people, and in particular of the rising generation. And such a gift was then given her for children, as I have hardly seen in any one, and a love like that of a parent. Next, the sick were laid on her heart, and she ran far and near to seek and relieve them, both in soul and body; insomuch, that it greatly broke her little strength, which was always but small. One night she dreamed she was looking out at our chamber windows on a parcel of fowls of all sorts and sizes, in the yard, when she saw a very little bird flying to and fro over them, and as each put up its head the little bird put a bit into its mouth. After looking on them some time, she thought she called me, and said, 'Only look how that little creature feeds those great fowls.' She then saw a most beautiful pillar in the sky; it appeared like gold exceeding bright. She was solemnly affected at the sight, and awoke with the application of these words to her heart, 'I have

made thee as this little bird, follow me, and I will make thee a pillar.' This brought to her mind a promise given her many years back ; " I will make thee a pillar in my house to go out no more." But though she had many sweet times of encouragement, her mind had usually a dejected turn. To hear her speak of her state in the meetings, you would almost have thought she had been cold, careless, and unfaithful, idle, and good for nothing, so frequently was she buffeted with fiery darts of accusation ; but at that very time, how have I been humbled to the dust, at the ardent zeal and diligent application wherewith she sought after the good of her fellow-creatures. For reproving sin, and inviting to the means of grace, few could equal her. Here I did indeed see the spirit of my dear Mr. Fletcher seem to rest on her ; and like him, she begun a meeting in a very hardened part of the parish with a bell in her hand,—the occasion of which was as follows : About this time there was a play begun of a very loose sort, which drew in many of the young people. They used each night to pass by our door like mad creatures ; she was greatly afflicted at this, as it appeared to be an inlet to much sin of many kinds. While she was continually laying the matter before the Lord, some men also began a game each night in the church-yard. She felt a conviction to reprove these, but found her nature very averse to such a cross ; however, as her greatest fear was that of not being faithful to what the Lord required, she ventured out among them, and strove to turn their minds to a better purpose, intreating them, with tears of love and pity, to take some thought for their souls, for whom the blood of Jesus had been shed. And

so did the Lord bless her feeble endeavours, that it was quite broken up from that very night. Encouraged by this, she still made her requests known to the Lord, that he might overturn the other evil also; and one night, standing at the door of our meeting room, by which they used to pass, she began to speak to them, but alas! it was like stopping mad bulls; then she said, if I cannot stop you I will break your ranks; and laying hold of two young women, she held them while she conversed with them, several more of the company passing by at the time, both men and women; and, blessed be God, we saw no more of it for two years, when some, whom we knew, made an attempt to renew it. We again cried to the Lord; and to some of the heads of it we sent this message.—“As I was standing at the window looking on them, the thought passed my mind, Ah, poor things! this is all the pleasure they will have to all eternity unless they repent.” The message was carried, and we have cause to praise God the sinful custom was quite broke off.

After the night above mentioned, when she spoke to the young women, and the play was given up, she took the first opportunity to go down the town, and inquire who were the ringleaders of the affair, and found it to be some navigators who were lately come into the parish to work at the new cut; she went to the houses where they lodged, and conversed with them, and observing to them the blessing promised on family prayer, she persuaded them to join with her therein. The thought then struck her mind, if she could once a week come to some house, and spend a little time with the children, and then about half an hour with the grown

people, that it would be a blessing. A place immediately opened, and each Thursday night, for near five years, she constantly attended them. But as she strove to suit their time, which varied at different parts of the year, she took the little bell in her hand, because they were not to gather till they heard it. This called out a number of children; and, O may her labours on them, as well as the parents, be found to everlasting life in that day!

Madeley Town is a hardened spot. I do not know I ever found more discouragement in speaking any where than there; and she was brought to shed tears over them many times, when going from door to door she intreated them to come, and in return met with only reproach and rudeness. But that was nothing to her, who sought no honour but from God. Sometimes Satan would represent, how ridiculous she appeared in their eyes; and when carnal strangers passed by in carriages, &c. that they would think her mad. But as these means she knew had been instrumental in calling some, and had been blest to many, as well as prevented much sin, she rejoiced to have the honour of being thought a fool for Christ. And such an intense love did she feel towards them, at the very time they were ridiculing her, that she has told me, "It seemed, she could, with pleasure, submit to be bound to a stake and burned, if it might but draw these souls to choose the way of life."

It has long been very grievous to us, that at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide, the carnal people would frequently introduce dancing, shews, &c. and much did she labour to prevent this gross abuse of these holy seasons. One night, passing

by a public house, where they were dancing, she looked to the Lord for power, and going in among them began to plead with them, and in a very moving and tender manner to express the love and concern she felt for their souls. And glory be to God, we have some in heaven who dated their first conviction from that hour. Indeed her whole soul seemed to be drawn out after the salvation of all around her. She began meetings in different places, on which numbers attended. Her method was, after singing and prayer, to read some life, experience, or some awakening author, stopping now and then, to explain and apply it as the Lord gave her utterance. And several, who are now lively believers in our connexion, were brought in through that means. But in every step she inquired of the Lord, fearing much to take one out of his order. She has mentioned to me a dream she had (I don't exactly know the time) in which she thought, she was informed her father (who died in the Lord many years ago,) was in a certain place and desired to see her; and that she and I went together for that purpose: but that in the way, I asked her to go and look at a dial, and tell me what hour it was. She went down a step stone walk, and saw it was just eleven, and came to a place which struck her with a solemn impression that God had a work to do there, and having a dish of corn in her hand, she stopt, and said, I will throw some of this corn about, in token the Lord will some time sow his Gospel in this place. As she went, a woman came out of her door and abused her much; but in her return the same woman bestowed many blessings upon her. She thought we went on till we came to an house, where we found her father. He

shewed her much affection, and said, 'My dear child, I could not rest till I saw you.' (A little before his death he had a promise of salvation for all his children.) After this she awoke. The dream made a strong impression on her mind, and often has she told me, she did believe she was to be called to some place she had never seen. But as it had a resemblance to some we passed through in Wales, she rather thought it would be in that country.

When the works commenced in Coalport, and the inhabitants began to increase, she was strongly invited to come and hold a meeting there; and found her mind drawn to accept this offer. But how was she struck, when the very stone walk and all the place where she had sown the corn, was as plain to her natural eye, as before she had seen it represented in her dream. On her return she said, "The houses and every part is as exact as if I had had it drawn in a picture." Here she continued to attend every other Sunday night, for four years, and much of the power of God was felt there. The sinners would scoff; but her word was amazingly received by numbers; and deeply did they lament when she could no longer meet with them as usual, and many an earnest prayer did they put up that she might be restored to them again.

I have before observed she had a natural tendency to be low; which was in part constitutional, and indeed I think she possessed the full answer of that prayer—

"Quick as the apple of an eye,  
O God, my conscience make."

She thirsted after a full conformity to God, and panted to worship him in the beauty of holiness;

often would she plead with the Lord to let her know what she was in his sight. One night she dreamed she was in a room with another person, but did not remember with whom. They were both much taken up with admiring a beautiful picture. As they were about to leave the room, she turned her head to have another look, and was surprised to see it move; when going before it she perceived its motions were similar to her own; she then saw her whole person from head to foot, as in a looking-glass, and of exquisite beauty: then lifting up her mind to the Lord, with inquiring wonder she was answered, 'I have made thee comely, through my comeliness, which I have put upon thee.' On which she awoke, praising the Lord. As she lay in the same room with me, she told me of it. I made answer: Well, it is the glass of faith, and when you steadily look through it, it shews you what you are in the reflected beauties of your Lord. I must here observe, from the time she thought she had lost that salvation, I could never discern in her any spirit but that of the most perfect deadness to earth, and such a submission to crosses of every kind as augured to me, her will was entirely lost in that of God.

I lament she did not keep a diary, but some little scraps I have found in her desk; one is a letter she wrote to a friend on her dear master's death—

“ Sept. 6, 1785.

“ My dear Friend,

“ In much trouble and grief of mind I now write to you. I have for a long time had many deep waters to wade through. My dear mistress was taken ill of a fever, and came out in spots.

My master and I suffered much in the fear of her being taken from us; but our gracious Lord in mercy to us hath raised her again. But before she was quite recovered my dear master was taken ill. And, O, what tongue can tell the patience with which he endured his affliction? He was all resignation to the will of God; life or death seemed equal to him. Indeed he had lived in such holy familiarity with death, that every day he would be talking of it; and at night, when lying down in his bed, he used to say, 'I seem to see myself as a corps stretched out on this bedstead.' Then he would add, 'Lord, give us dying grace,' and indeed he had it. O had you been favoured with waiting on my dear master in his dying moments, as I was, you would have seen how he passed through the valley of the shadow of death, and feared no evil. Satan seemed to have no power to tempt him: no, he had fought the good fight; and had then nothing to do but to slip quietly out of this into a better world. Never did I see one so filled with the love of God as he was. His whole soul seemed wrapped up in love! so that he often cried aloud, 'God is love! He hath given me such a manifestation of Himself in that character, as quite fills me! I cannot tell you half I feel!' He strove to comfort my dear mistress, saying, 'My dearest, what canst thou fear when God is Love!' He would often express great thankfulness for their union; and sure never were two more closely united. When on his death-bed he would look at her, and say, 'My dear, my precious, my generous Polly, God will open all thy way before thee.' She nursed him most tenderly, night and day, and never left him at all; and he often ex-

pressed his great satisfaction in having her so constantly about him ; indeed the Lord wonderfully gave her strength for the day. But, O, the stroke is very heavy upon her ! no one can tell what she goes through ; she seems ripening for glory, and I often fear her stay will be short. Lord, prepare me for that day. Truly it is a heavy stroke to me. I have lost the best of masters, and a kind, affectionate, tender father. But should I lose my dear mistress, who hath been such an indulgent mother to me for near twenty-five years, I should indeed become a desolate orphan. But the Lord knows what will be best ; I desire to give myself wholly up to Him. I find nothing will do but a constant looking to Jesus through all. Satan strives to oppress me, but the Lord gives me many precious promises, and I find him very near to me. I often rejoice in the thought of one day seeing my dear Redeemer face to face, and there meeting my dear friends, never to part again. O ! it will not be long before we shall have done with this weary world, and tempting devil. Hold out faith and patience a little longer.

“ How little did I think, on August 14, 1783, when on our journey to Ireland, that this day two years, the convoy of angels, the chariots of Israel, that separated Elijah from Elisha, would take my dear, dear master from my head that day ! Yes, he is gone from me ! but I still comfort myself with that thought, He who late my friend received, will send the chariot soon for me :

‘ Yes—for us is prepar’d

The angelical guard

The convoy attends !

A minist’ring host of invisible friends,

Ready wing'd for their flight,  
 To the regions of light,  
 The horses will come,  
 The chariot of Israel to carry us home !”

One more little fragment I find written in the white page of a book :

“ August, 1795. Yesterday being the second Sunday in the month, I found it a solemn season, a day much to be remembered, as it was just ten years since when my dear master was called to enter an eternal Sabbath of Rest. I feel my heart greatly drawn out in prayer, that I might enter into a larger measure of that rest which remains for the people of God. For though, glory be to his dear name, I have clearly felt his pardoning love for more than eighteen years, and have often found seasons, when I could truly feel I did love God with all my heart ; yet those happy moments were but short : unbelief would creep in, and too, too often my unwatchful heart would give way to discouragement, and let go its little hold on that glorious liberty. But yesterday how did my soul long and pant for my dear Lord, to come and make his abode in my worthless heart. I feel Him mine. I can indeed say,

‘ With me thou do'st ev'n now reside,  
 But in me thou shalt soon abide. ’”

As I flattered myself that she would close my eyes, I tenderly felt the pain she would suffer in the loss of me ; and wished to alleviate it to the utmost of my power. I therefore wrote now and then a few lines, for her to open when I should be no more on earth ; and as they express my real sentiments concerning her, I am not free to destroy, but leave them as a testimony of my sincere acknowledgments of what she was to me.

*“ October 2, 1786.*

*“ My very dear Sally,*

*“ I charge you never give way to the thought that you could have been to me any thing more than you have, for it is a temptation ! you have been to me a faithful child, and a great comfort. From the time I lost your dear and precious master, you have, under God, been my greatest temporal consolation. Give me now up to the Lord, in full confidence you shall come to us, and abide with us for ever. Sorrow not as those who have no hope of seeing their friends again, for you shall shortly be with us in glory,*

*‘ And the days which in heaven we spend,  
For ever and ever shall last.’ ”*

*In the year 1790, being ill, I wrote a postscript to confirm the above, and three years after as follows :—*

*“ June 19, 1793.*

*“ My dearest Child,*

*“ I have been reading over my first letter to you, wrote in 1786, and that of 1790, and do with all my heart, confirm every word therein. You are to me a most precious gift of the Almighty, and the greatest comfort, (next to God) of my life. It is my sorrow and sin that ever I have grieved you in any thing, for I am witness how tenderly and constantly you have strove in every thing to add to my happiness, and your labour has not been lost. What a support and comfort have you been to me in all my trials and afflictions ! I wish I could do more for you in temporals. But you know I have made my will as I thought conscience dictated ; and I thank God for being able to do for you as I have*

done; and now I can with confidence commit my dearest child to the arms of the Almighty, and am sure he will preserve both soul and body; for the Lord hath said to me, 'I will bless those that bless thee,' and never could I claim that promise more fully for any one than I can for you, in firm confidence it shall be answered. And now believe you are still one with me in the Lord. Remember forgetfulness is mortal, and gratitude is immortal! I can therefore never forget you. Believe your dear master and I are ready to receive and welcome you to the mansions of glory! I pray and believe the Head of the Church to be your head, as my dear, dear husband prayed for me. And I pray that the Lord may cause His Spirit to rest on you in such a way, as shall help on the souls of the dear people united in these societies. And I think our spirits will be with you, whenever you are led to tell them of the love of Jesus. They are also our kindred spirits, and cannot be forgotten in heaven!"

What I wrote for her Funeral Sermon was as follows:—

My dear friend, Sarah Lawrance, was many years weak and infirm, but her ardent desire for the salvation of souls carried her frequently beyond her strength, and many times, when she was speaking to sinners with a view to bring them to repentance, her poor body was fitter for bed, than any other place. It might be truly said, *the zeal of the Lord did eat her up*; and after she was quite confined, what tears and prayers did she offer for souls in and about this parish.

When I was going a few Sabbaths ago to meet the people at Coalport-House, she said to

me, 'You may give them my loving remembrance; if ever I was called any where, I surely was to that place. It seemed at times, as if my whole soul were drawn out in their behalf; and, when I think of the dear children, and grown persons too, who used to come through such deep roads to meet me, I cannot help turning my eyes, with tears and prayers, many times towards that spot. Well, I have a strong confidence I shall meet many of them at God's right hand. When I have been coming home in a dark night over Sutton Common, I have found such a sense of the heavenly host being round about me, and such communion with them as I cannot describe.' One day she said, with great tenderness, 'We have scarce ever been parted a day these forty years: how many hundred miles have we travelled together! And if the cold hand of death should now tear us asunder; it will not be for a long time. We shall have a blessed meeting in glory.' I replied, 'Little did I think to see this day: but we are called to resign ourselves to all the will of God; I have been thinking of that word I once heard my dear husband's voice speaking to me soon after his death,

'For the joy that's set before Thee,  
Bear a momentary pain:  
Die, to live the life of glory,  
Suffer with thy Lord to reign.'

"O!" said she, "that was the very word which came to my mind last night; but my head was so confused with the fever I could not recollect it; and this morning, as I was thinking on the faithfulness of God, I saw such a fulness in the promises as filled me with comfort, and the following words were impressed on my mind,

‘Having loved his own, he loveth them unto the end.’ ”

She was greatly affected at the idea of my lonely situation, which we both saw to be aggravated by many particular circumstances ; and she expressed how gladly, if it had been the will of God, she would have drunk of that bitter cup instead of me. As I was observing what some of the martyrs suffered, who left their families, languished in prisons, and were burnt at stakes she cried out, “O what have I to be thankful for ! not one neglect ! how carefully am I attended. Ah, what should I have done without you at this time !” Seeing me greatly afflicted, (though I strove to hide it from her) she expressed the tenderest concern, thinking of various things she wished to remind and counsel me about, and added, “If you were but in heaven, with what pleasure should I look at death.” Next day she said, “Many fiery darts have assaulted me this morning ; satan would have persuaded me that I am deceived, and that I have never known the Lord ; but I obtained relief by reflecting on the great change I felt when he first discovered his love to my heart. For months before, I feared to go to bed ; so dreadful was the thought of death to me ; but that hour I felt his forgiving love. O, how often, night after night, have I lain down with delight to think the messenger of death must come. Sometimes I have gone out into the fields, and looking around me, have thought how I could rejoice to see this earth rolling one part over another as a prelude to the Judge’s approach. Again, it was suggested, What if your experience is not like others, and you should not be ready ? You don’t know how others feel ; nor what they may mean by the

same words. I answered, I rely on nothing but the blood and power of the Lord Jesus, and none ever trusted in him, and was deceived. Then I cast my whole soul on Jesus, saying, Lord, here are clouds about me, but I will believe through this darkness. Immediately it was impressed with power on my heart, 'Blessed are the eyes that have not seen, and yet have believed;' and I was encouraged to hold fast my confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. I said, 'I will trust my great Physician's skill, what he prescribes can ne'er be ill;' and many times in a day, these words have been applied to my mind,

'From all thy afflictions, My glory shall spring;  
And the deeper thy sorrows, the louder thou'lt sing.'"

Afterwards she told me, "It seems as if the Lord had bound the enemy, he cannot afflict me as formerly; and if he suggest an accusation, these words pass through me in an instant,

'Myself, with all my sins, I cast  
On the atoning blood.'

Then Jesus shews me, he takes them all away, and the temptation is conquered."

When in much pain from continual coughing, with spasms all over her body, she sometimes cried out,

"Corruption, earth, and worms,  
Shall but refine this flesh,  
Till my triumphant spirit comes,  
To put it on afresh."

Nov. 8. The complaint so affected her throat, that she could neither swallow nor speak without great pain. She said, "I seldom awake but with these words in my heart, 'Ask what thou wilt, and I will do it for thee.' But, O, what

can I ask ! I have nothing to ask equal to holiness. I feel my strongest desire is for that, above life, ease, or any other thing. My soul truly waits on the Lord, and he often suggests to my mind, 'Blessed are they who wait for me.' After a little pause, she added, "I see such a sufficiency in Jesus, such a fulness as I cannot express. My whole soul is waiting on his dear Will." Her sufferings were now very grievous. Not a spoonful could she swallow, but with extreme pain, usually accompanied with a severe fit of coughing ; yet the most perfect patience, and sweet resignation were visible in her whole deportment, night and day.

On the 9th, she said, "I have many sweet comforts from the Lord, while I lie awake in the night. I now find fulfilled what my dear master said to me on his death-bed, 'Sally, you will never want a nurse, if you should be sick and weak. God will provide you a tender nurse for all the kindness you shew to me.' And, O, how do I prove it in you, my dear mistress : I should have been dead long ago, but for your tender care. I wish I were able to express what gratitude I feel to God and you." Indeed, through her whole illness she continually exclaimed, "What comforts I have ! what tender attention ! How true is that word, 'The Lord is a strong hold in the time of trouble ; and he knoweth them that trust in Him.'"

Nov. 11. She laboured much to speak, and at last said, "I cannot tell you what sweet communion I had last night with my Jesus. He seemed very near and loving. I was praising him for all my mercies, and it occurred to my mind, 'He that spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how shall he not with

him freely give us all things?' O, how true do I find that! I have every thing I can wish! Then I strove to praise him for the pains he is taking with me to purify, and fit me for glory; and he assured me I should come out of the furnace as fine gold. But I want expressions as well as breath, to tell you what close and sweet communion it was."

The 12th. She was trying with great pain to get down a little sago. Looking at me, she said, "Christ is mine, and I am his to all eternity. O, what comfort! No matter for this body."

On the 13th, she told me she was overcome with the goodness of God, "to think," said she, "of the straits my parents were brought to, and yet in my latter days to have such mercies! Last night I felt this so powerfully, that my soul seemed to call on the heavenly host to join me in a song of praise. O! I want angels and arch-angels, and all the host of heaven to praise him on my account." I said, Now, my dear, you see what good has been brought out of all your crosses. "Yes," replied she, "yes, yes; I would not be without one pain; all is mercy and love. But I have not speech to tell a thousandth part of his goodness."

Nov. 14. With difficulty, but much energy, she repeated these lines,

"Come, death, shake hands;—I'll kiss thy hands,  
'Tis happiness for me to die.  
What do you think,—that I will shrink?  
I'll go to immortality."

The 19th. After a sore night with her cough and many complaints, she observed, "What a sweet night I have had in the love of God! Such nearness to Jesus, such willingness to suffer with him did I feel, that I praised the Lord, for every

fit of coughing. Continually I am pointed to look at the dying Saviour, in these words,

“ See from his head, his hands, his feet,

Sorrow and love flow mingled down !

Did e’er such love and sorrow meet ?

Or thorns compose so rich a crown ?”

Indeed, she was such a pattern of patience as I scarce ever saw, and often said with a smile, “ Well, if it will glorify God, I am ready to suffer all this forty years : His will is all in all.”

At night, as I was giving her something which she could not swallow but with extreme pain, and very little even so, I said, “ Now, my dear, you are drinking of the cup which your Saviour drank when it pleased the Father to bruise him, and put him to grief.” “ Yes,” replied she, “ but what comforts I have !”

On the 21st she said, “ These words are with me night and day, ‘ Christ was given for us, that God might be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth on Jesus.’ And when I am trying to take food with so much pain, it often comes to my mind, ‘ With the finest wheat flour will I feed thee, and with honey out of the stony rock will I sustain thee.’” Being able to swallow a little to-day, she cried out, “ O, how I abound with mercies !” I cannot but here observe, she was for many years the servant of all, and had such care for the sick and needy, that her whole heart seemed engaged in that blessed work ; and now the Lord fulfilled his promise : He delivered her in the time of trouble, and made all her bed in her sickness.

The next day, she told me, she was perfectly satisfied with the will and order of God : “ Let,” said she, “ the illness end how it will ; we shall have cause to praise God to all eternity for

it; I have learned much in this profitable school. My will is quite conformed to that of God in all things. What I once thought I could not bear, now I feel to be right, because it is his dear will. And these words, which I used so to delight in when God set my soul at liberty, are continually with me ;

“Fill me with all the life of God;  
In mystic union join  
Me to thyself, and let me prove  
The fellowship divine.”

The 26th. She remained in the same state, both as to body and mind, only increasing in resignation and praise. Her tender feelings for me were great, and she said, “If the Lord would see good to answer my many years prayer, and spare me to close your eyes, and return you all this tender care in your last illness, I should exceedingly praise him. But I can ask nothing, only that his will may be done. In this we are perfectly agreed. We live in it, *Thy will be done*. Now I feel another of my dear master’s words fulfilled. He said, ‘Sally, God will put his right hand under you;’ and now I feel it verified indeed.” Repeating to her these verses,

“The deadly writing now I see,  
Nail’d with his body to the tree;  
Torn with the nails which pierc’d his hands,  
The old covenant no longer stands.  
Tho’ sign’d and written with my blood,  
As hell’s foundation sure it stood;  
Thine hath wash’d out the crimson stains,  
And white as snow my soul remains.”

She said with a smile, “Sweet, sweet!” I replied, and you now feel it? To which she answered, “Yes, but I want a further plunge.”

The 28th, she said, “I awoke in the night with these words,

“ My soul, ask what thou wilt,  
 Thou can’st not be too bold ;  
 Since his own blood for thee was spilt,  
 What can such love with-hold ? ”

I laid all our situation and trials before him, and felt such a full conformity to his will as brought much peace.

Her mouth and throat were now full of ulcers, and so sore, that it was with great difficulty she could either speak or swallow. All were amazed that she still lived. She frequently observed, that she awoke with a powerful application of these words to her mind,

“ Hark, the Redeemer, from the sky,  
 Sweetly invites his fav’rites nigh !—  
 My sister and my spouse, he cries,  
 Bound to my heart by various ties.”

She now continued to grow worse daily, but as her pains increased, so did her patience ; and often did she call on me to praise the Lord for the intervals of ease she found. One day, when I was rubbing her legs, she said, “ Now I feel quite comfortable ; what a mercy to have some hours free from pain. O ! I am gently dealt with.” Dec. 2, at night her breath was very bad. I sat up with her, and being alone, we had sweet fellowship in conversation. What thankfulness did she express that she had such a friend ; —“ One,” said she, “ who can enter into all the feelings of my soul. I am fully resigned to the will of God, but I long for a clearer manifestation. We are fellow-sufferers, and are both waiting for the Lord ! It is good both to hope and quietly wait for the Lord.”

Next morning she seemed rather better, and we got her up as usual. About 11 o’clock, as I was sitting by her, she was uncommonly engaged

in prayer. She expressed, though in broken accents, what a glorious display of the love of God was manifested to her, and what the Lord was speaking to her soul: "He says," said she, "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot, no spot in thee; the days of thy mourning are ended: thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty." Then she remained for a time in earnest prayer, with her hands joined, and eyes lifted up, and seemed pouring out her very soul to God. We could hear only some sentences, such as, "Lord, bless my dear friend; support her; comfort her; never leave her nor forsake her; be a wall of fire round about her." After a time, she said, "He says he will put his everlasting arms underneath you. We shall be of the same kindred; one family still; no division."

Mrs. Yate coming in, she said, "God bless Mrs. Yate, and all her family." I said, "My dear love, after all your trials, you now prove the faithfulness of God. She answered, with the full exertion of all her strength, "There is no cloud can arise. All is fair,—all clear,—all clear." I said, "Have you any sight opened of the invisible world?" She replied, "Yes;—Paradise! Heaven is opened: O what has Jesus bought for me!" And then added, "I believe the blood of Jesus cleanseth me from all sin; me, vile me, I come to him as the chief of sinners, and he hath washed me and made me all fair." After a pause, she said, "Give my love to the society—to all the societies." I answered, "My dear, I will; and tell them what God hath done for your soul. She replied, with vehemence, "'Tis beyond compare." Her speech now greatly failed, but on my saying, a convoy of ministering spirits will attend you, she earnestly said, "They

do minister; ready winged; ready winged;" meaning, she had a perception of it. She remained some hours in the pangs of death, but seemed quite sensible. I asked her, "If she was not in great pain?" to which she answered, "No." A little before her departure, I said, Have you the same sweet views of glory you had in the morning? She immediately lifted up her hand as high as she could, (the sign we had agreed on, for *yes*,) and at seven o'clock, Wednesday, December 3, 1800, without a further struggle, her happy spirit took its flight, to feast with Jesu's priests and kings.

My loss is great: She was a friend of a thousand; a child, and more than a child! But no arm of flesh is lasting. This is the lesson I am called to learn: and my whole dependence is on those everlasting arms which cannot fail. In the beginning of her illness, two years ago, she thought one morning in a dream, that my dear husband stood at her side, and looking on her as with tender sympathy, he said, "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed;" and I apprehend she alluded to that when she said so earnestly, "'Tis beyond compare;" meaning that I might tell the people, the present display of glory was already incomparably beyond all she had suffered. Well; on this I must fix my eye, and pass my solitary days firmly anchored in that sure ground,—Thy will be done.

MARY FLETCHER.

One day, conversing with my husband concerning our burial, he said she might be laid to us, if she died here, for she was our adopted child.

Remembering *that*, I have given her the title on one side of our tomb-stone in these words :—

Also,

SARAH LAWRENCE,

The Adopted Daughter of John and Mary de la Fletchere,

Who died December 3, 1800,

Aged 44 Years.

She loved God with all her heart, gloried in Christ Jesus,

Was zealous in His cause,

Suffered with unwearied Patience,

And finished her Course with Joy.

“ These overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and the Word of their Testimony.”

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THE END.